Maruti-Suzuki Deal

*324. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared in the Sunday Observer of Bombay, dated November 15, 1987 captioned 'Maruti sell out to Suzuki'.

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that Government have decided to sell off 14 percent of the equity shares of Maruti Udyog Limited to its Japanese collaborator, Suzuki Motor Company; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) Government have seen a news item in the said paper under the caption "Maruti to sell shares to MNC".

(b) and (c) Interms of Joint Venture Agreement, Suzuki Motor Company Limited has exercised its option to increase its equity holding in Maruti Udyog Limited to 40 per cent.

LPG Facility for rural areas of Rajasthan

*325. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of Government to issue LPG licences for rural and semi-urban areas of Rajasthan so as to extend the LPG gas connection facility in the rural areas of the State; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) LPG distributorships in the country, including in Rajasthan, are being established in a phased manner at locations with a population of around 20,000 and above and offering sufficient potential for economically viable marketing of the product. There is no proposal to establish distributorships in rural or semi-urban areas as such.

Setting up of regional office of ONGC in Rajamundhry

*326 SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ONGC is conducting drilling operations for the exploration of oil and natural gas in several parts of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is also a fact that at present the ONGC is not having any regional office in that State; and

(c) if so, whether the State Government has offered to allot land and provide other infrastructural facilities for setting up a regional office of the ONGC in Rajamundhry, if so, what is the Government's decision in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. However, ONGC is having a Project Office at Rajamundhry headed by a General Manager to look after its operations in the Krishna-Godavari area.

(c) The State Government had offered assistance for setting up a Regional Office by ONGC at Kakinada. However, since the Southern Regional Business Centre, caters to the needs of Cauvery and Andaman basins in addition to Krishna-Godavari basin, it is proposed to retain the regional headquarters at Madras.

Report of the A. K. Shah Committee

*329. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the A.K. Shah Committee set up to probe into the losses in the power sector has since submitted its report on the question of reducing transmission and distribution losses; and